United Nations S/2012/736–S/2012/736

Security Council

Distr.: General
4 October 2012

Original: English

Letter dated 2 October 2012 from the Permanent Representative of Timor-Leste to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

On instructions from my Government, I have the honour to transmit herewith a letter dated 20 September 2012 addressed to you from Kay Rala Xanana Gusmão, Prime Minister of the Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste. The original letter was forwarded through the Office of the Acting Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Timor-Leste and head of the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste, for onward transmission.

I should be grateful if you could have the present letter circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Sofia **Borges**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

12-53019 (E) 111012

Please recycle

Annex to the letter dated 2 October 2012 from the Permanent Representative of Timor-Leste to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

In its resolution 2037 (2012), dated 23 February 2012, the Security Council requested you to present a report to it within 60 days following formation of the new Government.

The report should include a review of the political and security situation recommendations on the completion of the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (UNMIT) and the respective handover of responsibility to the Timorese.

The Government of Timor-Leste, in consultation with UNMIT and with other relevant stakeholders, is responsible for making decisions on the nature, activities and role of the United Nations after the withdrawal of UNMIT.

We would like to begin by expressing our appreciation and heartfelt gratitude to the United Nations for the commitment, solidarity and support it has given to Timor-Leste from the time of the popular consultation in 1999 up until today.

Only with the contribution of the several United Nations missions in Timor-Leste were we able to establish the foundations for our national development, which began with the creation of the administration of our newly independent country.

Our circumstances as a young and post-conflict country, facing the challenges that you understand so well, justified the establishment of several different United Nations missions, both to assist the State-building process and to ensure national peace and stability.

In that context, we must also highlight the role played by UNMIT in the restoration of internal security and in providing support to the Timorese State to consolidate democracy, improve political dialogue and develop measures to promote tolerance.

For that very reason, the initial mandate of UNMIT was extended by the Security Council until December 2012, taking into account the scheduled presidential and parliamentary elections of this year.

In order to prepare for the withdrawal of UNMIT, a high-level committee was created in February 2011, consisting of representatives of the State of Timor-Leste and UNMIT, to draft a joint transition plan to implement and monitor the finalization of UNMIT activities, including the handover process.

We are deeply satisfied to conclude that the assumptions underpinning the drafting of the joint transition plan, which was approved by both parties on 19 September 2011, have been successfully met. That is:

- Stability has prevailed
- General elections have been held in accordance with international standards
- The Government has been formed based on the outcome of the elections
- Political opposition has had space to operate in accordance with democratic principles

Furthermore, significant progress has been made in the primary areas identified in the UNMIT transitional process, leading us to believe that the overall political and social environment in Timor-Leste is stable and that we are now in a position to assume leadership of the national development process, including consolidation of the building of our democratic State in accordance with the rule of law and the implementation of our Strategic Development Plan 2011-2030.

UNMIT performed its activities in the areas mentioned below.

Police and security

The five key areas of support to the National Police Force of Timor-Leste, namely, in institutional capacity-building, establishing a legal and regulatory framework, management, discipline and accountability, and operational support, have been successfully addressed, and have resulted in the national police now operating as a more professional and capable institution. This progress enabled the handover of full responsibility from the United Nations police to the national police across every district on 27 March 2011. To date, there has been no record of any security disturbance in any part of the country.

With regard to the security sector, the three areas of support, namely, in establishing policies, plans and a legal framework, rules and regulations, and supervision and training, have also been successfully addressed. The defence and security reforms, which received considerable support from UNMIT, are being implemented successfully and with effective and measurable outcomes, including through the implementation of strategic plans in each sector and the creation of new bodies and agencies that contribute to institutional strengthening.

Rule of law, justice and human rights

The contribution of UNMIT was also important in this area, as it established technical assistance programmes that made a significant contribution to the operation of the public prosecutor, the courts and other interested agencies by providing specialized training. As a result, the performance of our justice institutions improved considerably.

The support provided by UNMIT to the Timorese, in specialized areas such as domestic violence, youth justice and gender issues, has raised the awareness of the entire population. Legislation and legal concepts have been socialized by way of information campaigns promoted by UNMIT that achieved satisfactory results all round.

The ombudsman for Human Rights and Justice and the National Committee for Children and Civil Society were the main beneficiaries of this valuable support.

In addition, UNMIT dedicated significant time to facilitating discussion forums on justice with civil society, including work undertaken by the group established to pursue the national priority for justice. This, together with the ongoing monitoring and reporting of the human rights situation in our country, particularly in relation to vulnerable groups, has had a positive impact on the Timorese justice sector.

Democratic governance

UNMIT performed a particularly important role in this vital area of State-building.

We would like to highlight the significant support provided in the two recent elections as well as in the elections held two years ago to select community leaders. This support included technical advice, voter education. logistical support and campaigns encouraging political participation by women. UNMIT worked to consolidate and build the capacity of the relevant agencies, enabling them to acquire invaluable experience and operate independently in the future.

In order to build the capacity of the Timorese State with regard to accountability, transparency and the fight against corruption, UNMIT provided outstanding technical assistance to the Anti-Corruption Commission which, as a result, is in a better position to perform the mandate given to it by the Timorese State. UNMIT also supported the establishment of the Chamber of Accounts as well as professional associations for accountants and engineers, which will play a central role in the building of the State. Civil society also benefited in a significant way from the capacity-building provided by UNMIT and, importantly, now has a capability to monitor State budget expenditure. Civil society is currently performing its duty with competence and professionalism.

UNMIT has assisted in the creation of the Consultative Council for Civil Society, demonstrating the broad scope of activity of the Mission. UNMIT has also assisted in the establishment of a coordination mechanism between the Government and civil society with regard to civic education that has been performing well.

Furthermore, UNMIT has held democratic governance forums at both the national and district levels. UNMIT has also provided valuable support to civil society organizations and to local political leaders and staff, enabling them to take on more responsibilities, including improved data collection and the drafting of reports on the activities of State agencies.

Social and economic development

UNMIT, having received an extensive mandate, also supported sustainable development through reviews and high-quality advice, which enabled us to better undertake tasks in this area.

UNMIT assisted the Millennium Development Goals secretariat and provided support to the National Priorities Programme of the Government enabling it to implement the Strategic Development Plan 2011-2030.

You had the opportunity to witness this programme for yourself during your visit to Timor-Leste in August. We believe that the progress made in areas such as education, health, economic development, culture, institutional capacity-building, improved financial management and public administration, as well as accountability and anti-corruption measures, gives a strong indication of the consolidation of our nation.

In addition, UNMIT provided technical assistance on planning, gender issues and equal opportunity, private sector development, macroeconomic policy and other areas, which has contributed to the improvement of our planning process as